THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SUSHREE UMA BHARTI): (a) to (c) For improving India's performance in the international sports events, the following measures are being taken:—

(i) As per the Government Policy and Olympic Charter, the National Sports Federations, recognized by the Government are primarily responsible for the promotion of their disciplines. The National Sports Federations have formulated Long Term Development Plans (LTDPs) covering various aspects in consultation, *inter-alia*, with the Sports Authority of India. The National Sports Federations are being assisted in arranging coaching camps for sports persons included in the National Teams, with the help of Indian and Foreign Coaches, provision of requisite equipment and scientific support through the Sports Authority of India.

(ii) The Federations are also assisted in holding National level championships and in sending sports persons for participation in International Sports Events.

(iii) Promising sports persons are being provided a package of assistance (up to Rs. 5 Lakhs per year) for training and upgradation of their skills. Supporting personnel, such as coaches and sports scientists, are also being assisted to undergo specialized training.

(iv) Assistance is being provided for creation of sports infrastructure, including laying of Synethetic Surfaces.

(v) With a view to further motivate the sports persons, awards and incentives are provided; the scale of awards has been increased substantially.

(vi) Other Ministries are also being pursued for extending incentives to sports persons and to consider measures for the employment of ports persons.

Asian Volleyball Tournament in Islamabad

2885. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Asian Qualification Tournament for the World Junior Men's Volleyball Championship was held in Islamabad in May, 2001;

(b) if so, the names of the countries which participated in this tournament;

(c) whether the proposal for India's participation in this tournament was cleared by Government; if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the reasons for denying permission to the Indian Cricket team to play with Pakistan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI P. RADHAKIRISHNAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The names of the countries, which participated in this tournament are Korea, Saudi Arabia, Japan, Iran, Pakistan, India, Chinese Taipei, Australia and Kazakhstan.

(c) Since it was a pre-qualification tournament for participation of Indian team in World Junior, Men's Volleyball Championship, Government had cleared participation in this tournament.

(d) After taking all the relevant factors into consideration, the Government has decided that circumstances prevailing at present are not yet fully conducive for Indian cricket team to play bilateral matches against Pakistan. There is, however, generally no objection to playing against Pakistan in multilateral matches at regular venues.

Youth development centres in Himachal Pradesh

2886. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have launched a scheme for setting up youth development centres in Himachal Pradesh;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.